DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 263 500 CG 018 657

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TITLE The Effects of Knowledge of Child Development and Social Emotional Maturity on Adolescent Attitudes Toward Parenting.
PUB DATE [79]
NOTE 36p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Adolescents; Attitudes; *Child Development; Child Rearing; *Emotional Development; *Females; Higher Education; Junior High Schools; Negative Attitudes; *Parenthood Education; *Social Development

ABSTRACT

Parenting, always a complex and difficult task, is even more difficult for teenage parents who are generally less able financially, emotionally, and cognitively than adults to nurture and care for their children. The relationship between the combined effect of knowledge of child development and level of social-emotional maturity, and the extent to which this relationship affects adolescent attitudes toward parenting was investigated in 434 females from junior colleges, a university, and a junior high school. Subjects completed the Knowledge of Child Development Inventory, the California Psychological Inventory, and the Adult/Adolescent Parenting Inventory. The analysis of the data (multiple regression and canonical analysis) suggested that there were significant relationships among the variables being examined. In general, the relationships indicated that subjects' negative attitudes toward parenting were associated with lack of knowledge of child development and low levels of social-emotional maturity, and subjects' positive attitudes toward parenting were associated with knowledge of child development and high levels of social-emotional maturity. The joint impact of knowledge of child development and social-emotional maturity factors on attitudes toward parenting accounted for 51 percent of the variation among the variables. (Several data tables are included throughout the text.) (Author/NRB)

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THE EFFECTS OF KNOWLEDGE OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL EMOTIONAL MATURITY ON ADOLESCENT ATTITUDES TOWARD PARENTING

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship between the combined effect of knowledge of child development and level of social-emotional maturity, and the extent to which this relationship affects adolescent attitudes toward parenting. The analysis of the data (multiple regression and canonical analysis) suggested that there were significant relationships among these variables. In general, the relationships indicated that subjects' negative attitudes toward parenting were associated with lack of knowledge of child development and low levels of social-emotional maturity, and subjects' positive attitudes toward parenting were associated with knowledge of child development and high levels of social-emotional maturity. The joint impact of knowledge of child development and social-emotional maturity factors on attitudes toward parenting accounted for 51% of the variation among the variables.

Key Words:

adolescents

Knowledge of child development

parenting attitudes

social-emotional maturity

The Effects Of Knowledge Of Child Development
And Social-Emotional Maturity on Adolescent
Attitudes Toward Parenting

Parenthood is a major social role for which society requires no credentials and no training (White House Conference, 1970). Parenting abilities are assumed to develop naturally as a result of family membership. However, the small mobile family of today offers youth few experiences with young children or opportunities for observing parent roles. Two false assumptions have pervaded American attitudes toward families and child rearing; that the ability to raise children wisely is a natural talent possessed by most parents and that child rearing is always a joyful, positive experience. Parenting is a complex and difficult task. The responsibilities and skills required to guide a child in our society, from helpless infancy to mature adulthood, are unrelenting and challenging to even the most mature adult.

Teenage Parenting

The complexities of parenting are even more strenuous for teenage parents who are generally less able financially, emotionally and cognitively than adults to nurture and care for their children. According to Markham and Jacobson (1976), most teenage girls in the United States are not prepared to cope with the day to day needs of a baby. The teenage mother's initial excitement about becoming a mother can soon be superceded by social and economic problems. When the constant demands of caring for the baby become difficult, abuse of the infant may result (Markham and Jacobson, 1976).

The effects of becoming pregnant as a teenager can be devastating for

both the mother and child. Yet, seventy percent of teenage mothers receive no parental instruction or prenatal care. Infant mortality for mothers under 18 is almost three times as high as that of women 20 to 24 years of age, and the number of low birth weight babies is greater among teenage mothers than any other age group. In 1979, one out of four low birth weight babies was born to a teenage mother, about 60,000. In addition, the suicide rate for teenage mothers is seven times higher than is the rate for non-mothers (Illinois Caucus, 1979).

The magnitude of this group at high risk for optimal development is alarming. In 1976, 1,100,000 teenage pregnancies resulted in 570,000 live births, 378,000 abortions and 152,000 miscarriages (Tietze, 1979). Three-fourths of teenage pregnancies occur prior to marriage. One-fifth of all births in the United States, over 600,000 in 1978, were to teenagers. In 1979 one-third of the abortions performed in the United States were to teenagers (Illinois Caucus, 1979).

Components of Effective Parenting

Attitudes toward parenting, knowledge of child development, and social-emotional maturity are important for effective parenting and the more knowledgable and mature the individual the more positive should be the attitude toward parenting. This has been the partial assumption underlying earlier government funding (1972). Programs were designed to increase knowledge of child development and subsequently influence parenting attitudes and behaviors.

However, knowledge alone is not sufficient to ensure effective parenting. An individual must also be socially and emotionally mature

enough to center on another person and be empathically aware of and sensitive to the needs of this person. These are prerequisites for effective, responsible parenting.

Knowledge of Child Development

There has been little or no empirical research to substantiate the relationship between the knowledge of child development and effective parenting. However, there is research suggesting that a contributing factor in abusive parenting is a lack of such knowledge. Abusive parents often have unrealistic estimates of what the young child is able to understand, (Bavolek et,al., 1978; Hefler, 1973; Justice & Justice, 1976; Steele, 1970). Hefler, (1973) and Steele (1970) report further that abusive parents over estimate the physical and mental development of their children, which results in abusive parents placing inappropriate and unattainable expectations on their children. The abusive parent often lacks a functional concept that children are individuals with age-appropriate needs and behaviors (Hefler, 1973; 1974; Steele, 1970).

Lack of knowledge of child development has also been identified as a factor contributing to difficulty in teenage parenting. Field (1979) reports some differences between teenage parents and adult parents and their offspring in the early months of life. Teenage mothers of term babies expected their infants to attain certain developmental milestones later than did adult mothers, but teenage mothers of preterm infants expected these milestones to appear much earlier. DeLissovoy (1973) interviewed and observed a group of white teenage parents from a rural working background. He reported that both mothers and fathers had early expectations for normative behaviors. Lpstein (1978) reported

that among black teenage mothers, late developmental expectations were negatively related to awareness of child development. Whelan and Higgins (1973) found that most young parents are ignorant of what is expected of an infant in his first years, often expecting the baby to sit alone at six weeks, to be toilet trained by six months, and to recognize wrong doing before one year of age. Weigle (1974) reported that adolescents seem to know very little about infants, i.e. the age at which a baby can be expected to smile, crawl, sit up or achieve other developmental milestones and concluded that this lack of knowledge of appropriate child development results in adolescent parents having unrealistic expectations of their children.

Social-Emotional Maturity

Theoretically, social-emotional maturity is considered an important factor in parenting. From the Eriksonian perspective, an individual at the adolescent stage of development, i.e. Identity vs. Role Confusion, would not be at the appropriate level to adequately meet the needs of an infant. Adolescence is a distinct state of development that has its own unique needs and concerns. This state is characterized by the development of a clear and continuing sense of who one is and what one's goals are, a sense of identity which is not tied to parenting.

Erikson (1950, 1968) designates adulthood as the ideal stage for accepting the responsibilities of mothering. This stage is characterized by an ability and desire to be productive and to nurture and devote one's self to others and to productive work. To effectively mother, the mothering person must be able to effect an optimal-enough matching of her needs as a mother and individual with those of the child. To achieve this end, having a child must be sufficiently ego syntonic and sufficiently

emotionally gratifying. The mothering person must be able to integrate having a child with her other fundamental needs, such as fulfilling life long identifications and self images. This mature adult state of development is indicative of a high level of social-emotional maturity and is fully attainable only after the individual has adequately achieved the prerequisite adolescent stage of identity and the young adult stage of intimacy. The adolescent girl may be too concerned with self to be able to expend herself to meet the needs of another, especially in the complex and unrelenting task of guiding the development of a young and helpless infant.

Heath (1977) has elaborated on Erikson's theory and proposed that maternal competence is the primary function of maternal maturity. Conversely one would expect maternal incompetence to be an outcome of maternal immaturity. The immature mother, egocentric, incapable of empathic understanding of her child, and lacking confidence in herself as a mother is threatened by problems which arise during child rearing. She is more likely to handle child-rearing problems in a haphazard manner, dominated by her own impulses, feelings, and reactions. Lacking self-control and frustration tolerance, she is apt to use inappropriate and often punitive means to control.

In contrast, Heath (1977) states that the mature mother is able to symbolize, anticipate, and reflect upon difficulties she may have with her child. Being more allocentric the mature mother is capable of empathically understanding the view points and feelings of her child. The more mature mother, being more self confident and stable, is less threatened when problems arise during child rearing. Being more autonomous, she is capable of independently developing, initiating, and

carrying out child rearing strategies.

Nowhere is the failure of parents in child rearing better illustrated than in current child abuse literature. The abusive parent has been characterized as an individual who has unmet emotional needs of her own (Hefler, 1973; Martin, 1976; Steele, 1975); lacks self-esteem (Hefler, 1973; Steele, 1975); has low frustration tolerance (Hageman, 1977; Thompson, 1977) lacks ego strength (Blumberg, 1977; Katz, 1975); and is dependent (Smith, 1976; Steele, 1975). The abusing parents are found to lack mothering skills i.e., maternal warmth and supportiveness, (DeLissovoy, 1973; Hefler, 1973; Steele & Pollock, 1968); to be unaware empathetically of the child's needs (Hefler, 1973; Steele, 1975; Wall, 1975); and often misperceive the child's intentions (DeLissovoy, 1973; Hefler, 1973; Steele, 1975).

In child rearing matters, the abusive parent acts in ways primarily oriented toward the parent's own needs and conveniences rather than to the child's (DeLissovoy, 1973; Hefler, 1973; Steele, 1975), and copes with stress through repression, denial, projection and punitive means (Blumburg, 1977; Hageman, 1977; Steele, 1975). Adolescents have their own developmental stresses, needs, and moods that can interfere with child rearing, Weigle (1974) and Bruce (1978) state that parenthood demands new social skills on the part of the young parent, before the roles and tasks of parenthood are comprehended by the individual. Nye's (1976) research concurs with this; he states that school-age girls and boys may attempt to be effective parents, but their biological, occupational, and social development is not yet advanced to the point that adolescents can handle adult responsibilities with success. Mercer (1976) warns that developmental conflict and crisis may arise when one is attempting to cope with adolescence, pregnancy, marriage, and motherhood all in the same period.

A study was implemented to investigate the relationship between the combined effect of knowledge of child development and level of socio-emotional maturity and the extent to which this relationship affects attitude toward parenting. A convenience sample consisting of 434 females from junior colleges, a university and a junior high school in a large metropolitan area and its suburbs participated in this study. The racial background of the sample was 341 White, 78 Black, and 15 participants of Spanish background. There were 151, 13 and 14 year old subjects; 94 were between 15 and 17, 94 between 18 and 22 and 95 over 22 years of age. Additional demographic information was obtained in the following categories: one or two parent family, number of siblings, birth order, course-work in child development, participation in parent training, parenting, and babysitting experience.

The Knowledge of Child Development Inventory (KCDI) was designed specifically for this study. The 56 item multiple choice test consists of four sections dealing with emotional, cognitive, physical, and social development. Each section has 14 questions which pertain to child development from birth to age three. The instrument has a reading level of 8.0 on The Fry Reading Index. Content validity was obtained through the use of a table of specifications developed from the current knowledge of child development reviewed by a panel of experts. Criterion validity of .83 was obtained from 24 graduate students in Early Childhood/Special Education through a comparison of scores on the KCDI and chapter tests from the manual of Smart and Smart's textbook (1977). Reliability of .93 was obtained using Cronback's alpha coefficient of internal consistency.

The California Psychological Inventory (CPI) (Gough, 1957), a true-false test designed for use with "normal" subjects, and effective with young subjects was used to measure social-emotional maturity. The following

four scales were utilized as trait measures in this study: Responsibility (Re): To identify persons of conscientious responsible, and dependable disposition and temperament. Socialization (So): To indicate the degree of social maturity, integrity and rectitude which the individual has attained. Self-control (Sc): To assess the degree and adequacy of self-regulation and self-control, and freedom from impulsivity and self-centeredness. Tolerance (To): To identify persons with permissive, accepting, and non-judgemental social beliefs and attitude.

The Adult/Adolescent Parenting Inventory (A/API) (Bavolek, 1978), a five point rating scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, was utilized to obtain a measure of parenting and child rearing attitudes. The A/API identifies those adolescents and adults who are "high risk," in terms of adequate child rearing and parenting. The 32 test items were developed from the following four abusive parenting constructs: (1) inappropriate parental expectations of the child, (2) inability of the parent to be empathically aware of the child's needs, (3) strong parental belief in the value of punishment and (4) role reversal.

PROCEDURE

Three separate test sessions of one hour each were conducted. During the first session, the participants completed both a one page information sheet detailing their family background and also the Adolescent Parenting Inventory. The second session was devoted to the California Psychological Inventory. During the final session, The Knowledge of Child Development was administered. All directions and test items were read aloud to the subjects by the researcher to provide continuity, to maintain control for differing reading abilities, and to enccourage the subject to stay on task throughout the study.

Initially, it was necessary to establish the corrective relationships between the subject's (a) knowledge of child development and attitudes toward parenting, (b) social-emotional maturity and attitudes toward parenting, and (c) knowledge of child development and social emotional maturity. Then the correlative relationships among attitudes (the major focus of the paper) toward parenting, and the combination of knowledge of child development, and social-emotional maturity were determined.

In order to determine the correlations between the multiple factors of concern in this study, two different statistical procedures were utilized; multiple regression and canonical correlation analysis. The latter addresses the question of the relation between two sets of data with several independent variables and several dependent variables.

RESULTS

Correlation scores between the KCDI and A/API

Results of a multiple regression stepwise analysis are presented in Table 1. The F test ($F = 48.82$; $df = 4,430$) was significant at the .001 level of probability. Three subscales of the Adult/Adolescent Parent Inventory (A/API) accounted for 33% of the variation relative to the Knowledge of Child Development factor. Empathic awareness had the highest correlation (.53), was the most significant contributor to the regression equation accounting for 28% of the variation, and had a beta weight of .40, more than twice that of the next highest sub scale (.19). The physical punishment sub scale and the role reversal sub scale appear to make significant contributions, (.42) and (.36) accounting for 4% and 1% of the variation respectively.

These results suggest that the greater the knowledge of child development the better the individual's attitudes toward parenting especially related to (a) empathic awareness of the children's needs and to a lesser degree (b) not believing in the use of physical means to punish or correct misconduct or inadequacy on the part of the child, and (c) not expecting the child to meet adult needs rather than vice versa.

TABLE 1

REGRESSION OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT INVENTORY (KDCI) WITH THE ADULT/ADOLESCENT PARENT INVENTORY (A/API)

A/API Variables	Beta	Simple r	RSQ change	F
Empathic Awareness	.40	.53	.28	166.18
Physical Punishment	.19	.42	.04	99.80
Role Reversal	.14	.36	.01	70.29
Expectations	-.04	.20	.001	58.83

Multiple R = .56

R^2 = .31

Overall F = 48.82; df = 4,430; p .001

Correlation scores between the CPI and A/API

Canonical correlation analysis was used to test the relationships between parenting attitude scores on the four scales of the A/API (expectations, empathic awareness, role reversal, and physical punishment) and the social-emotional maturity scores measured by four scales of the CPI (responsibility, socialization, self control, and tolerance).

The results (Table 2) show three significant canonical correlations (r = .58, .20, .13; probabilities less than 0.000, .001, .039), with eigen values of .33, .04, and .02, accounting for 39% of the total variation. The first of the three canonical correlations was the most significant accounting for 33% of the variation among the variables. Within the parenting attitude variate set: empathic awareness contributed the most (-.77), followed by role reversal (-.28), physical punishment (-.21) and expectations (.10). Within the CPI variate set the variates contributed in the following manner: responsibility (-.44), tolerance (-.39), socialization (-.33), and self control (-.14). This suggests that lack of empathic awareness, role reversal, and use of physical punishment, are related to a low level of social emotional maturity characterized by a limited sense of responsibility, tolerance, socialization, and self-control.

TABLE 2

CANONICAL CORRELATIONS OF THE

ADULT/ADOLESCENT PARENTING INVENTORY (A/API)

WITH THE CALIFORNIA PSYCHOLOGICAL INVENTORY (CPI)

First Variate Set	First Canonical Variate	Second Canonical Variate	Third Canonical Variate
A/API			
Expectations	.10	.56	.89
Empathic Awareness	-.77	-.31	-.19
Role Reversal	-.28	-.72	.38
Physical Punishment	-.21	.88	-.59
Second Variate Set			
CPI			
Responsibility	-.44	-.41	.65
Tolerance	-.39	-.003	-.10
Socialization	-.33	1.16	.13
Self Control	-.14	-.68	.29

Canonical Correlations	Eigenvalue	Wilks Lambda	ChiSquare	D.F.	Significance Level
1. .58	.33	.62	202.02	16	0.000
2. .20	.04	.93	28.97	9	0.001
3. .13	.02	.97	10.10	4	0.039

The second canonical correlation (Table 2) indicates that within the first variate set the parenting attitude variates contribute in the following manner: physical punishment (.88), role reversal (-.72), expectations (.56), and empathic awareness (-.31). Within the second variate set the social-emotional maturity variates contribute in the following manner: socialization (1.16), self control (-.68), responsibility (-.41), and tolerance (-.003).

The third canonical correlation (Table 2), the least significant of the three, indicates that within the first variate set the parenting attitude variates contribute in the following manner: expectations (.89), physical punishment (-.59), role reversal (.38), and empathic awareness (-.19). Within the second variate set the social-emotional maturity variates contribute in the following manner: responsibility (.65), self-concept (.29), socialization (.13), and tolerance (-.10).

The second and third canonical correlations suggest separate groups of subjects from the first canonical correlation, and account for 4% and 2% of the variation respectively. Both the second and third canonical correlations reveal subjects with conflicting parenting attitudes and both high and low levels of social-emotional maturity.

Correlation scores between the KCDI and CPI

Multiple regression stepwise analyses were employed to determine the relationship between subjects' knowledge of Child Development scores as measured by the KCDI and their respective social-emotional scores measured by the CPI. The F test ($F = 18.45$; df 4,432) of the multiple regression analysis is significant at the .001 level of probability. The responsibility sub scale of the CPI has the highest correlation with the knowledge of child development factor (.33) and is the most significant

contributor to the regression equation accounting for 11% of the variation. Two other sub scales measuring the maturity factor are significantly correlated and appear to be significant contributors to the regression equation: the tolerance scale (.31) and the socialization scale (.30) accounting for 4% and 2% of the variation respectively (Table 3). The total amount of variance between the KCDI factor and the CPI sub scales was 17%.

This multiple regression correlation suggests a relationship between subjects' knowledge of child development and social-emotional maturity that is characterized by (a) a high level of responsibility and, to a lesser degree, (b) high levels of tolerance and (c) socialization. The greater the knowledge of child development the higher the level of social-emotional maturity. However, the correlations are not particularly high (.33, .31, .30, .26) and do not account for a great deal of change (.11, .04, .02, .001) which suggests that the KCDI and the CPI Class II scales measure different factors, i.e., the knowledge of child development and social-emotional maturity components in this study are separate factors.

TABLE 3

REGRESSION OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT INVENTORY (KDCI) WITH THE CALIFORNIA PSYCHOLOGICAL INVENTORY (CPI)

CPI Variables	Beta	Simple r	RSQ change	F
Responsibility	.19	.33	.11	52.22
Tolerance	.19	.31	.04	36.88
Socialization	.17	.30	.02	28.72
Self Control	-.03	.26	.001	21.56

Multiple R = .21

R^2 = .04

Overall F = 18.45; df = 4,432; p .001

Correlation scores among the A/API, KCDI, and CPI

Canonical correlation analysis was used to test the relationship among parenting attitude scores (A/API), social-emotional maturity scores (CPI), and knowledge of child development scores (KCDI). The results (Table 4) show two significant canonical correlations (r = .68, .21; probabilities less than .000, .003) with eigen values of .46 and .05, accounting for 51% of the total variation.

The first canonical correlation in this analysis (Table 4) which accounted for 46% of the total variation reveals that within the parent attitude, variates contribute in the following manner: the empathic awareness variable contributed the most (-.74), role reversal (-.26) physical punishment (-.26) and expectation (.09). Associated with this set from the A/API was knowledge of child development (-.58) and these factors from the CPI: responsibility (-.26), tolerance (-.22), socialization (-.19), and self-control (-.12).

The major focus of this study was the relationship between the combined effect of knowledge of child development and level of social-emotional maturity and the extent to which it affects attitude toward parenting. One would expect each of the former to be positively correlated with the latter. However the specific factors within each and the specific characteristics and behaviors which in combination contribute to a significant relationship provide profiles of potential parents.

This canonical correlation (Profile 1) identifies a group of subjects whose scores portray negative parenting attitudes that are characterized by a lack of empathic awareness for the needs of children and to a lesser degree, belief in the use of physical punishment, and role reversal in

TABLE 4

CANNONICAL CORRELATIONS OF THE ADULT/ADOLESCENT PARENTING INVENTORY (A/API) WITH THE CALIFORNIA PSYCHOLOGICAL INVENTORY (CPI) AND WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT INVENTORY (KCDI)

First Variate Set	First Canonical Variate	Second Canonical Variate
A/API (Parenting Attitudes)		
Empathic Awareness	-.74	.36
Role Reversal	-.26	.72
Physical Punishment	-.26	-.90
Expectations	.09	-.54
Second Variate Set		
KCDI (Knowledge)	-.58	-.19
CPI (Social-Emotional Maturity)		
Responsibility	-.26	.51
Tolerance	-.22	.08
Socialization	-.19	-1.06
Self Control	-.12	.67

	Canonical Correlations	Eigenvalue	Wilks Lambda	ChiSquare	D.F.	Significance Level
1.	.68	.46	.50	293.98	20	.000
2.	.21	.05	.93	30.10	12	.003

PROFILE 1

A/API (Parenting Attitudes)

Empathic Awareness	(-.74)	lack of awareness of child's needs
Role Reversal	(-.26)	belief that the child should meet the adult's needs rather than vice-versa
Physical Punishment	(-.26)	belief in the use of physical punishment as a method of discipline
Expectations	(.09)	appropriate expectations for age level behavior

KCDI (Knowledge) (-.58)

lack of knowledge of child development

CPI (Social-Emotional Maturity)

Responsibility	(-.26)	Immature, moody, lazy, awkward, changeable, and disbelieving; as being influenced by personal bias, spite, and dogmatism; and as under-controlled and impulsive in behavior.
Tolerance	(-.22)	Suspicious, narrow, aloof, wary, and retiring; as being passive and overly judgmental in attitude; and as disbelieving and distrustful in personal and social outlook.

Socialization	(-.19)	Defensive, demanding, opinionated, resentful, stubborn, headstrong, rebellious, and undependable; as being guileful and deceitful in dealing with others; and as given to excess, exhibition, and ostentation in their behavior.
Self-Control	(-.12)	Impulsive, shrewd, excitable, irritable, self-centered, and uninhibited; as being aggressive and assertive; and as over-emphasizing personal pleasure and self-gain.

parenting. These negative parenting attitudes are correlated with both a lack of knowledge of child development and limited social-emotional development. Referring to the CPI descriptors for these scores the following profile of an individual can be projected: one who is immature, overly influenced by personal bias, distrustful and aloof, lacking impulse control, overly judgmental, demanding, resentful, undependable, irritable, aggressive, self-centered, and concerned with personal pleasure and self-gain.

The second canonical correlation in the analysis (Table 4) which accounted for 5% of the total variation reveals the following contributions from within the parent attitude variate set: physical punishment (-.90), role reversal (.72), expectations (-.54), and empathic awareness (.36). Factors from the CPI which were associated with these from the A/API were socialization(-1.06), self-control (.67), responsibility (.51), and tolerance (.08). Knowledge of child development contributed (-.19).

The second canonical correlation suggests a separate group of subjects who differ from those revealed in the first canonical correlations. They have conflicting parenting attitudes and both positive and negative scores from the California Psychological Inventory. On the negative side (Profile 2), these subjects disclose parenting attitudes that favor the use of physical punishment as a methodology in parenting and lack appropriate expectations of children. The negative attitudes are associated with social-emotional maturity characterized by a lack of socialization and limited knowledge of child development in the second variate set. What can be projected on the negative side is an individual who has limited knowledge of appropriate age level expectations of children and, referring to CPI descriptors for these scores, the individual can be characterized as being demanding, resentful, stubborn, and undependable.

On the positive side (Profile 2), these subjects disclose parenting attitudes favorable in regard to role reversals and empathic awareness toward the needs of children. These attitudes are associated with social emotional maturity that is characterized by self-control and a sense of responsibility. Referring to the CPI descriptors the following profile of an individual can be projected: one who is patient, self-denying, thoughtful, conscientious, tolerant, and resourceful.

This canonical correlation identifies a group of subjects who have conflicting attitudes toward parenting, uneven levels of social-emotional maturity, and limited knowledge of child development.

In summary, the findings of these two canonical correlations support the major contention of this study that attitudes toward parenting are associated with the combined effect of knowledge of child development and social-emotional maturity. Negative parenting attitudes are associated with a lack of knowledge of child development and low levels of responsibility, tolerance, socialization, and self-control, i.e. the individual is unaware of what to expect from a child at various age levels and is limited in the development of social emotional maturity.

PROFILE 2

Negative	Positive
A/API (Parenting Attitudes)	
Physical Punishment (-.90) belief in the use of physical punishment as a method of discipline	Role Reversal (.72) not expecting the child to meet adult needs
Expectations (-.54) inappropriate expectations of the child	Empathic Awareness (.36) ability of the parents to be empathically aware of the child's needs
CPI Social-Emotional Maturity	
Socialization (-1.06) Defensive, demanding, opinionated, resentful, stubborn, headstrong, rebellious and undependable; as being guileful and deceitful in dealing with others; and as given to excess, exhibition, and ostentation in their behavior	Self-Control (.67) Calm, patient, practical, slow, self-denying, inhibited, thoughtful, and deliberate; as being strict and thorough in their own work and in their expectations for others; and as being honest and conscientious.
	Responsibility (.51) Planful, responsible, thorough, progressive, capable, dignified, and independent; as being conscientious and dependable; resourceful and efficient; and as being alert to ethical and moral issues.

Tolerance (.08)

Enterprising, informal, quick, tolerant, clear-thinking, and resourceful; as being intellectually able and verbally fluent; and as having broad and varied interests

KCDI

(-.19) Knowledge of Child Development

TABLE 5

CORRELATIONS OF THE DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

	KCDI	EX	EA	RR	PP	RE	SO	SC	TO
AGE	.35	.02	.37	.29	.26	.42	.28	.49	.40
HSCD	-.26	.05	.16	-.10	-.22	-.02	-.04	-.11	-.17
CCD	-.29	-.06	-.38	-.31	-.23	-.35	-.27	-.46	-.32
PARG	.09	-.07	-.09	-.12	-.13	-.16	-.07	-.09	-.04
BABS	-.01	-.01	-.01	.02	.03	.08	-.01	.04	-.04
2PAR	-.05	-.05	-.08	.01	-.05	-.04	-.05	.03	.01
SIBS	-.02	.09	.02	.10	.04	.11	.04	.10	.07
BIRO	.04	.03	.01	.05	.01	.06	.07	-.01	.02
CHILD	-.30	.02	-.24	-.18	-.07	-.24	-.09	-.26	-.20
CHU 4	.10	.03	-.03	-.03	-.13	-.09	-.06	-.16	-.11

MNEMONIC LABEL	VARIABLE DESCRIPTION
Demographics	
AGE	Age
HSCD	High School Child Development Course
CCD	College Child Development Course
PARG	Parent Group
BABA	Babysitting Experience
1 PAR	Two Parent Family
SIBS	Siblings
BIRO	Birth Order
CHILD	Children
CHU 4	Children under four

KCDI	Knowledge of Child Development Inventory
A/API	Adult/Adolescent Parenting Inventory
EX	Expectations
EA	Empathic Awareness
RR	Role Reversal
PP	Physical Punishment
CPI	California Psychological Inventory
Re	Responsibility
So	Socialization
Sc	Self Control
To	Tolerance

Associated Demographic Characteristics

Table 5 illustrates the correlations between selected demographic characteristics with the KCDI, A/API, and CPI variables. Several of the demographic characteristics appeared to be marginally significant (correlations above .20). The analysis suggested that the older the subject the more positive her attitude toward parenting, the greater her knowledge of child development, and the higher her level of social-emotional maturity. In addition, subjects who had not taken a college level course in child development or had no children of their own were associated with negative attitudes toward parenting, limited knowledge of child development, and a lower level of social-emotional maturity.

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions drawn from the results of this study should be examined in light of the analysis techniques that were employed. Multiple regression and canonical correlations, allow for the explanation of the degree of relationship but do not allow for cause-effect relationships to be substantiated. In addition, variables which were not included in the analysis, may be relevant.

Although the findings of this study support the contention that knowledge of child development and social-emotional maturity are factors associated with attitudes toward parenting, it is not possible to conjecture whether training adolescents (or anyone else) for the parenting task by transmitting factual information about child development is an effective training strategy. To determine the effectiveness of this training strategy it would be necessary to establish treatments, control groups, and pre and post measures of knowledge of child development. Such procedures have not previously been possible due to the unavailability of appropriate instrumentation. The Knowledge of Child Development Inventory (KCDI) designed for this study opens the way for further research of this type.

The findings of this study suggest several considerations if teaching cognitive knowledge of child development as a parenting effectiveness training strategy is contemplated. It would appear that a certain level of social-emotional maturity is necessary in order for cognitive instruction in knowledge of child development to be an effective method of parent attitude training. This conjecture is supported by several of the findings related to the subjects' demographic characteristics as well.

The concept of teaching adolescents effective child rearing practices prior to parenthood seems to be a logical approach. J. McVicker Hunt (Pines, 1979), a major proponent of this position proposes that this approach allows for the

possibility, especially for the poor under-educated population, to learn some new ideas about child rearing before they have fully absorbed and incorporated the child rearing attitudes and beliefs of their social class. He states that the poor under-educated population is hard to reach and influence since they do not read child development advice books and magazines; thus, he suggests that it may be effective to influence 14 and 15 year olds while they are still in school.

In contrast, Vladimir DeLissovoy (1977) reasons that an individual in the adolescent years is not maturationally ready to understand or resolve the developmental tasks of parenthood. DeLissovoy cautions against a "cognitive education for parenthood" approach, stating that such an approach ignores the developmental imperatives of adolescents. He argues that so great are the internal dynamics and social-stimuli for the adolescent that the future of being a parent is unlikely to be of present interest. He advocates, from an Eriksonian position, that a more relevant pre-parent education program for adolescents would be an approach to facilitate the resolution of the identity crisis, i.e. to help the adolescent identify occupational choices and an ideological commitment which are the precursors of the parental sense. DeLissovoy (1977) concludes that the objectives of the cognitive approach may be sound but the target audience (the adolescent) is questionable.

Although this present study does not directly address the training approach question, the findings suggest that the training of adolescents for the parenting task is not simply a matter of providing a course in child development. What results do indicate is that both social-emotional maturity and knowledge of child development are factors associated with

attitudes toward parenting. The results indicate that the joint impact of these two factors on attitudes toward parenting needs further investigation if intelligent decisions concerning the training of adolescents for the parenting task are to be made.

The authors are particularly concerned with determining more specifically how parenting attitudes are affected by the interplay between these two factors, i.e. can an individual's lack of knowledge of child development be compensated for by a high level of social-emotional maturity or vice versa, can an individual's low level of social-emotional maturity be compensated for by adequate knowledge of child development. In addition, investigation of stage of identity resolution relative to the variables of concern in this study would be a fruitful avenue for further research.

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